

54 *POPULAR CULTURE IX*
KARNATAKA

"What if they are brother and cousin
and great grand-
father and kinsmen? Those who are
not yours, I shall
not consider as mine. Devotion to kin
Is uttermost hell."

The man of realisation sees God
everywhere and
cannot think of hurting anyone or
anything :

"The one has become the five elements.
The sun and moon,
Oh God, are they not your body? I
stand up and see;
you fill the world. Whom, then,
shall I injure?
Oh Ramanatha!"

This brief summary of the sayings of the
Virasaiva
saints will have made it clear that the
Virasaiva
movement touched the root of the
people's con-
science and fed it with the water of life.
Thought of
right and wrong, examination of one's
self and an
effort to live righteously became common
among its
followers. Thus it is that many of these
saints came
from the common people. We need not be
afraid of
the phrase " common people/⁵ in this
context. It
merely means persons whose pursuits were
not parti-
cularly learned or religious. The saints
were men
and women going about the ordinary
business of life,,
earning their bread and looking after wives
and chil-
dren. Yet when touched by the teaching
of a great
faith they evolved in the commonplace
circumstances
of their lives a spiritual consciousness that
might not
come with years of mere learning. How
common the
pursuits of these people were is worth
noting,
Ittappaiya was an umbrella-holder;

Chennaiya an out-
caste and shoe-maker; Machideva was a
washerman;
Sangaiya was a huntsman; Muddaiah a
cultivator;
Kamideva was talwar or watchman;
Kamappa had
an oil mill; cowherd Ramanna,
Kethaiya the